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UNCLAS MUSCAT 000222

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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FOR NEA/ARPI

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KISL](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [XF](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: QUELLING VIOLENT REACTIONS TO OFFENSIVE CARTOONS:
OMAN

REF: A. SECSTATE 20587

[B](#). MUSCAT 133

[1](#). (SBU) The Embassy delivered ref A demarche February 14 thanking the Omani government for its role in helping to calm public reactions to the offensive Danish cartoons and urging continued efforts to promote peaceful dialogue. To date, there have been no acts of violence stemming from the cartoon controversy, though an unofficial popular boycott of Danish products has been widespread and effective (ref B).

[2](#). (SBU) A number of articles have appeared in the local press condemning violence and calling for peaceful dialogue. On February 13, an appeal for calm signed by 41 international Islamic scholars, including Oman's Grand Mufti Shaykh Ahmad al-Khalili, was published. Government-owned Arabic daily "Oman" printed an editorial February 10 on the theme of "Dialogue and tolerance is the best solution." A local commentator contributed an article in that same edition's religion section calling on Omanis to reject the acts of violence (such as witnessed in Syria and Lebanon) and appealing to Muslims not to "deviate from the righteous path." The Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs sponsored a lecture at the Sultan's Grand Mosque on February 5 by an American Islamic expert that also touched on tolerance issues. The Omani government has not, to our knowledge, lodged any formal protests with countries that published the cartoons, nor threatened to suspend or alter its normal diplomatic relations with countries involved in the controversy.
BALTIMORE